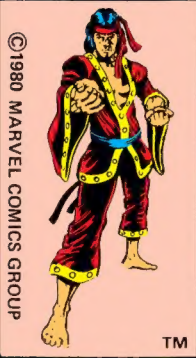


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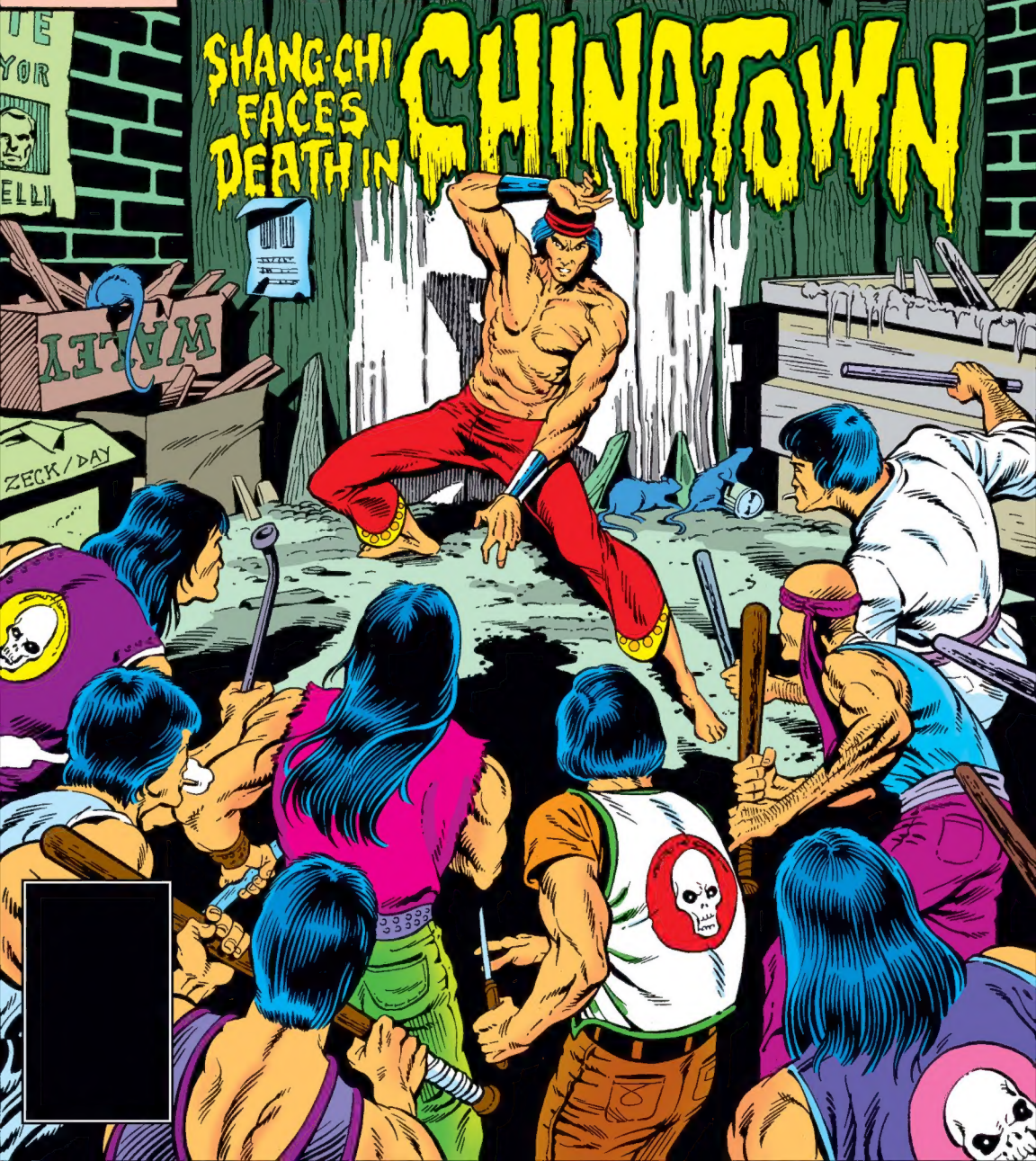
MARVEL® COMICS GROUP

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BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY



MASTER OF KUNG FU

SHANG-CHI
FACES
DEATH IN
CHINATOWN



"Call me Shang-Chi, as my **father** did, when he raised me in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father: that my name means 'The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit,' and that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu. Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu**, the most insidiously evil man on Earth... and that to **honor** him would bring nothing but **dishonor** to the spirit of my **name**."

Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

MASTER OF KUNG FU!®

Featuring supporting characters created by SAX ROHMER

TRIUMPHS OF THE FLESH

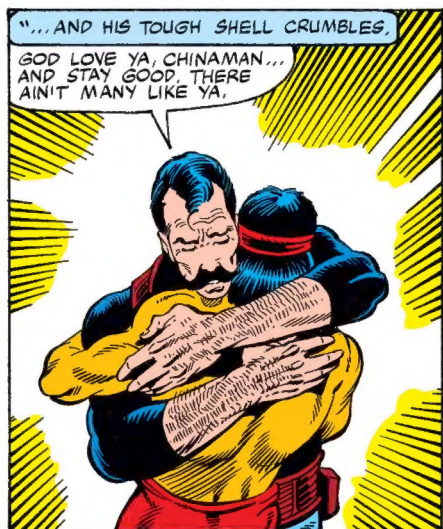
"PIER 23, DAWN: AGAIN FU MANCHU HAS APPARENTLY GONE TO HIS DEATH... AND AGAIN HE HAS PROBABLY ESCAPED... YET ONE FACT REMAINS UNCHANGED: I LOST MY FATHER LONG AGO."

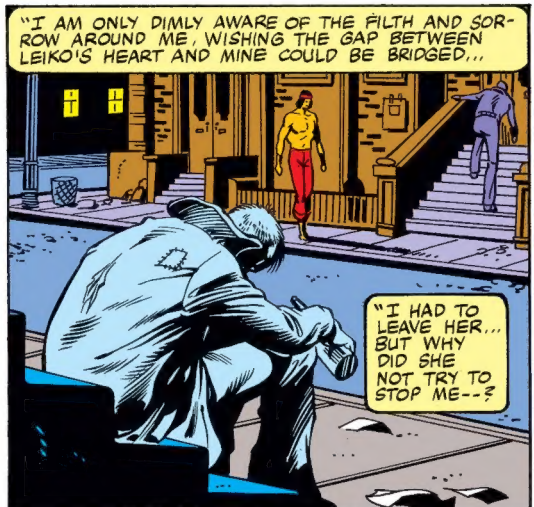
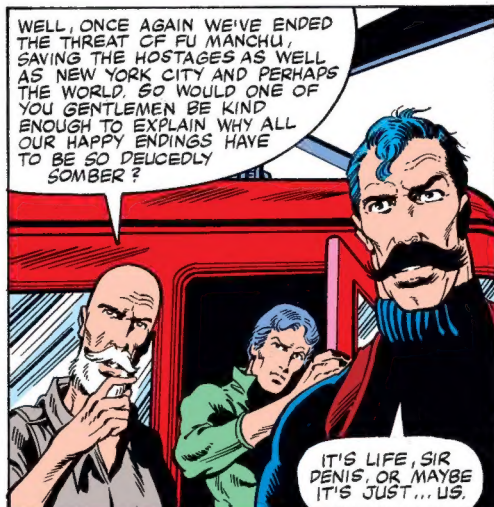
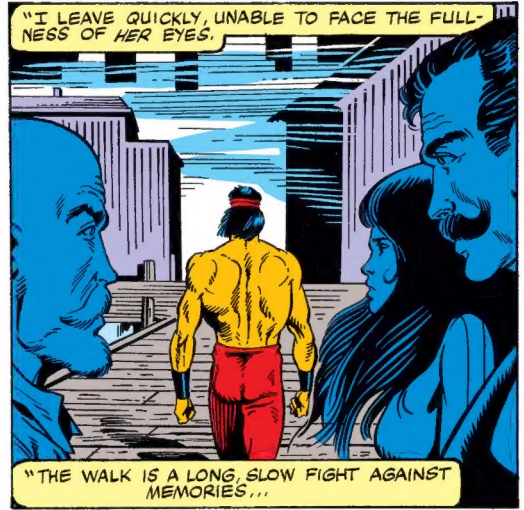
"THANK HEAVEN YOU'RE SAFE, LAD. WE WERE WORRIED THAT FU MANCHU HAD SOMEHOW... WELL, THE STATEMENT IS BEST LEFT UNFINISHED."

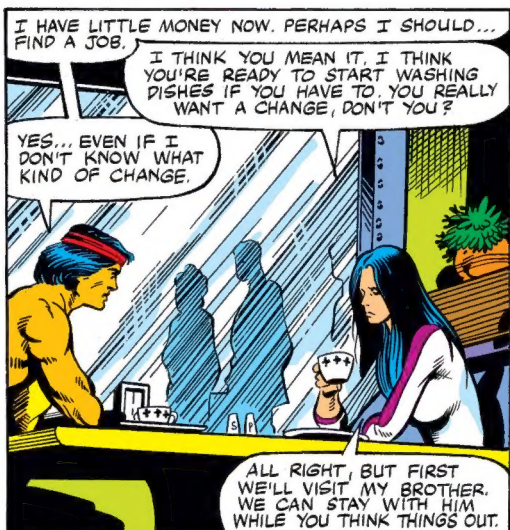
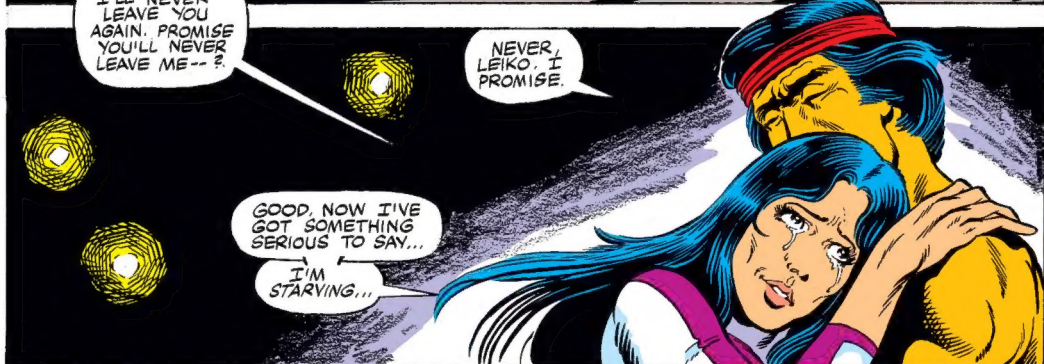
"NOW SHALL WE TAKE OUR LEAVE OF NEW YORK?"

"NO."

DOUG MOENCH / MIKE ZECK / GENE DAY / JIM NOVAK / BOB SHAREN / JIM SALICRUP / JIM SHOOTER
WRITER / ARTIST / INKER / LETTERER / COLORIST / EDITOR / EDITOR-IN-CHIEF









YOUR BROTHER LIVES IN NEW YORK?
TEMPORARILY, YOU SEE, DAVID DECIDED TO FOLLOW IN OUR FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS.

AND YOUR FATHER WAS A DIPLOMAT...

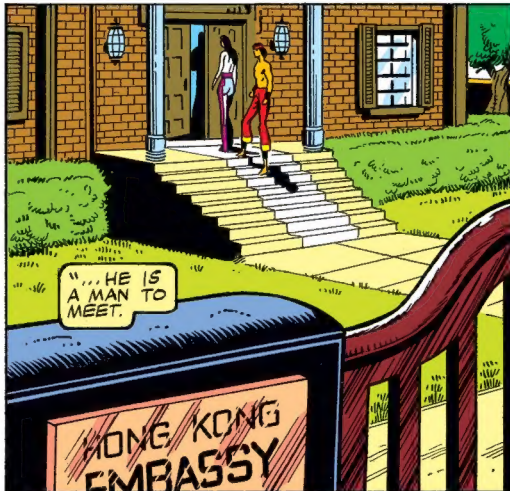


HONG KONG CULTURAL ATTACHÉ-- AND SOMETIME SPY FOR THE CROWN-- STATIONED IN LONDON. DAVID SERVES MUCH THE SAME FUNCTION HERE IN AMERICA.



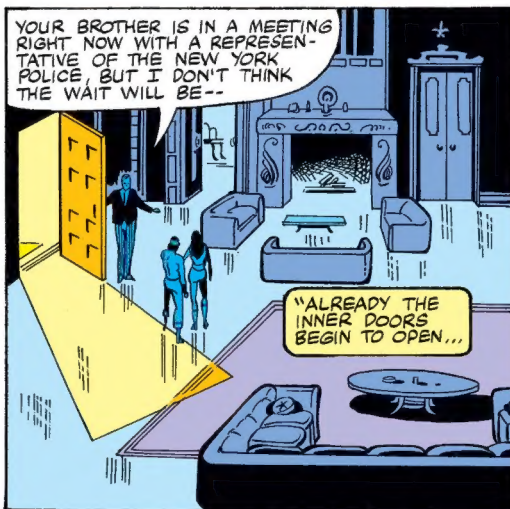
HE'S EVEN SEATED IN THE U.N. BUT DON'T WORRY-- HE'S OMITTED THE SPY ANGLE. IF ANYTHING, HE DESPISES 'GAMES' OF DECEIT AND DEATH" EVEN MORE THAN YOU DO.

"THEN, I THINK..."



"... HE IS A MAN TO MEET.

HONG KONG EMBASSY



YOUR BROTHER IS IN A MEETING RIGHT NOW WITH A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NEW YORK POLICE, BUT I DON'T THINK THE WAIT WILL BE--

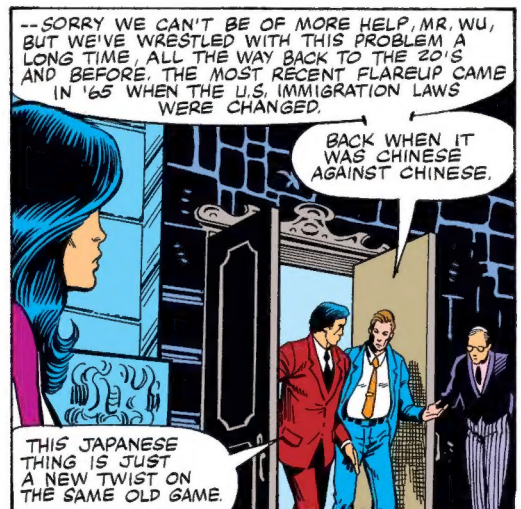
"ALREADY THE INNER DOORS BEGIN TO OPEN..."



MISS WU! IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG! BUT DAVID DID NOT MENTION--

IT'S A SURPRISE, DEE.

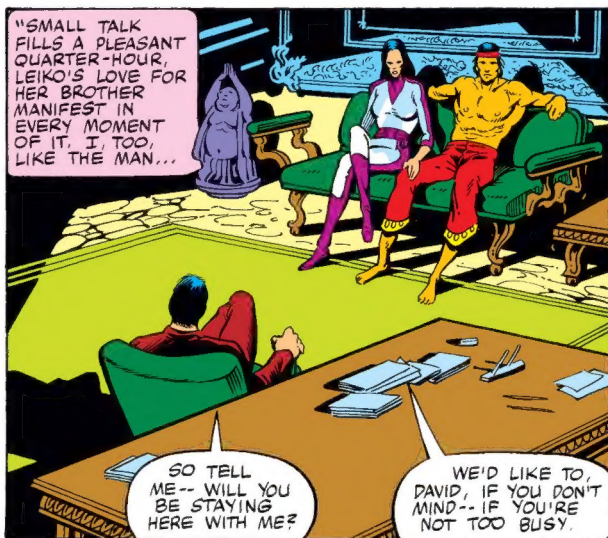
I SEE-- AND A WONDERFUL SURPRISE. COME IN, PLEASE.



--SORRY WE CAN'T BE OF MORE HELP, MR. WU, BUT WE'VE WRESTLED WITH THIS PROBLEM A LONG TIME, ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE 20'S AND BEFORE. THE MOST RECENT FLAREUP CAME IN '65 WHEN THE U.S. IMMIGRATION LAWS WERE CHANGED.

BACK WHEN IT WAS CHINESE AGAINST CHINESE.

THIS JAPANESE THING IS JUST A NEW TWIST ON THE SAME OLD GAME.



THESE ARE LETTERS FROM THE CHINESE COMMUNITY. TECHNICALLY IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS, BUT THE POLICE ARE SO INEFFECTUAL... THEN AGAIN, THAT'S PARTLY THE RESULT OF THE COMMUNITY ITSELF. UPHOLDING ONE'S HERITAGE IS FINE--

--BUT THEY ARE TOO INSULAR, TOO SECREITIVE.

THEY LOOK UPON THE POLICE AS OUTSIDERS-- AND WHEN THE POLICE CANNOT, AS A RESULT, GET CLOSE TO THE PROBLEM... WELL, THEN THE COMMUNITY'S DISTRUST IS SELF-FULFILLED.

SO THE PEOPLE TURN TO ME.

AND SINCE YOU FEEL IT IS NOT YOUR PLACE TO INTERFERE, YOU TURN IT BACK TO THE POLICE...

I THINK YOU ALREADY KNOW THE ANSWER, DAVID...

YES, A VICIOUS CIRCLE, I SUPPOSE, BUT WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

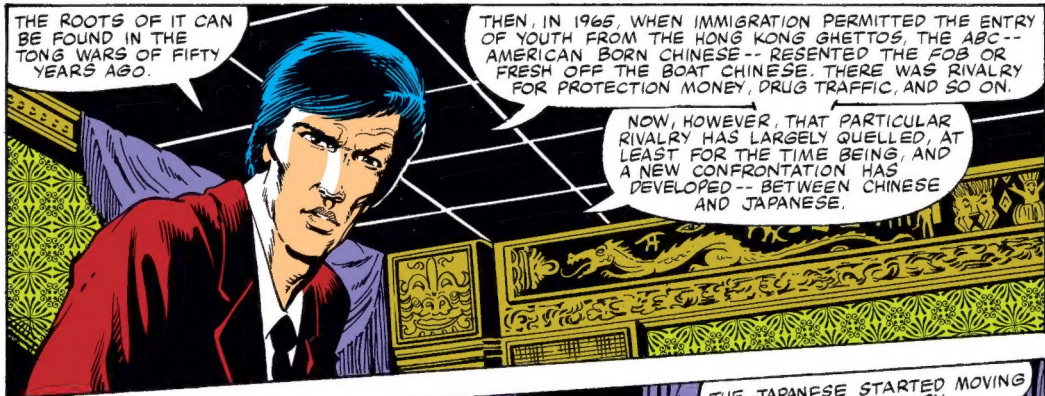
...AND I SUSPECT YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE MATTER HAS NOT ENDED.

NO, I SUPPOSE NOT. PART OF MY FUNCTION IS TO SERVE AS A CULTURAL ATTACHE... AND IF THIS PROBLEM IS NOT ONE OF CULTURE, THEN IT IS NOTHING.

WHY DO YOU SAY IT IS ONE OF CULTURE?

BECAUSE IT PINPOINTS THE DIFFICULTY OF ONE CULTURE SURVIVING IN THE MIDST OF ANOTHER-- ONE TRANSPLANTED TO ANOTHER...

BUT INSTEAD OF FOCUSING ON THE TRUE CONFRONTATION-- CHINESE AND AMERICANS --THE PROBLEM FOLDS IN UPON ITSELF UNTIL CHINESE CONFRONT CHINESE.



THE ROOTS OF IT CAN BE FOUND IN THE TONG WARS OF FIFTY YEARS AGO.

THEN, IN 1965, WHEN IMMIGRATION PERMITTED THE ENTRY OF YOUTH FROM THE HONG KONG GHETTOS, THE ABC-- AMERICAN BORN CHINESE-- RESENTED THE FOB OR FRESH OFF THE BOAT CHINESE. THERE WAS RIVALRY FOR PROTECTION MONEY, DRUG TRAFFIC, AND SO ON.

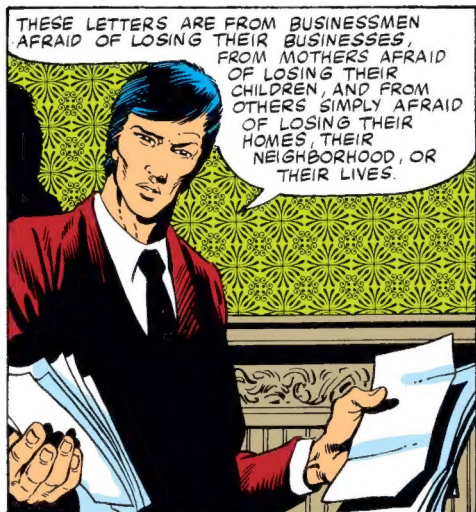
NOW, HOWEVER, THAT PARTICULAR RIVALRY HAS LARGELY QUELLED, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING, AND A NEW CONFRONTATION HAS DEVELOPED-- BETWEEN CHINESE AND JAPANESE.



THE NEIGHBORHOODS ARE CHANGING. PREVIOUS VIOLENCE BETWEEN THE ABC AND FOB FACTIONS HAS GREATLY AFFECTED TOURIST TRADE AND HAS DRIVEN MANY OLDER CHINESE OUT OF CHINATOWN AND THE SURROUNDING AREA.

THE JAPANESE STARTED MOVING IN AND A NEW RIVALRY DEVELOPED.

THE MAIN STRIFE SEEMS TO EXIST BETWEEN TWO LARGE GANGS -- THE JOY BOYS, WHO ARE ABC CHINESE, AND THE GOLDEN CLAWS, A GROUP OF "BUDDHA-HEADS", OR JAPANESE WHO ARE ALSO AMERICAN BORN.



THESE LETTERS ARE FROM BUSINESSMEN AFRAID OF LOSING THEIR BUSINESSES, FROM MOTHERS AFRAID OF LOSING THEIR CHILDREN, AND FROM OTHERS SIMPLY AFRAID OF LOSING THEIR HOMES, THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD, OR THEIR LIVES.



AND YOU CANNOT TURN AWAY FROM THEM.

NO, I CAN'T.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

I REALLY DON'T KNOW-- BUT THERE IS TIME ENOUGH TO CONTEMPLATE IT IN THE DAYS AHEAD. RIGHT NOW, PEE WILL SHOW YOU TO YOUR ROOMS.

DINNER IS SERVED AT EIGHT.



"NIGHT: LEIKO SLEEPS,

"I CANNOT.



"DINNER WAS GOOD BUT DISTURBING, THE FLAVOR EXCELLENT, THE MOOD SPOILED.



"THE CONVERSATION REVEALED THAT FOUR INNOCENT PEOPLE WERE SHOT IN A CHINATOWN RESTAURANT LAST WEEK, ALL VICTIMS OF MISGUIDED GANG VIOLENCE.



"THREE MORE HAVE SINCE DIED, ALL GANG MEMBERS, OFTEN THE AIM OF VIOLENCE IS TRUE, BUT MISGUIDED NONETHELESS.

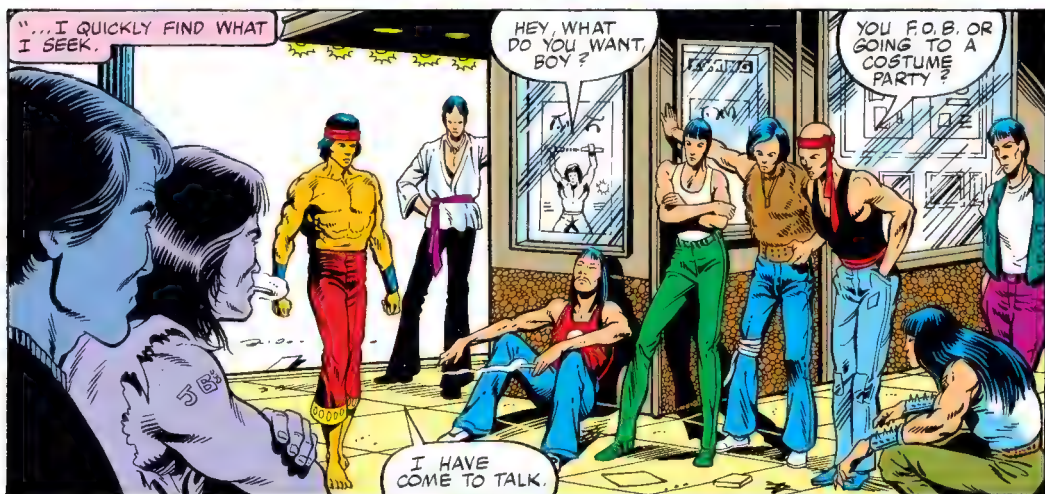


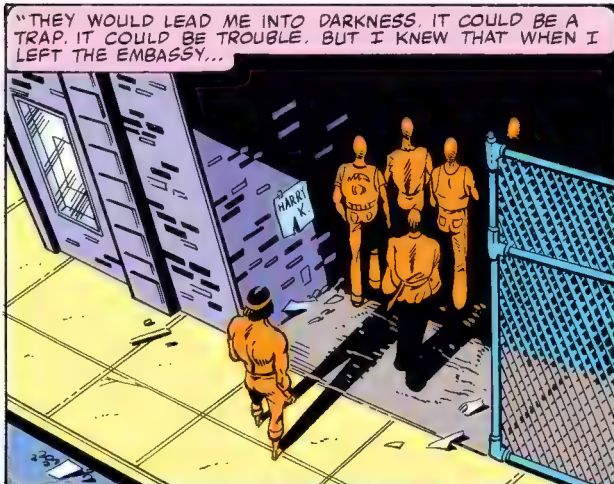
"DAVID IS A GOOD MAN WHO MEANS WELL... BUT MORE WILL DIE, PERHAPS TRUE TARGETS, PERHAPS MERE BYSTANDERS... WHILE LEIKO'S BROTHER CONTEMPLATES IT IN THE DAYS AHEAD.



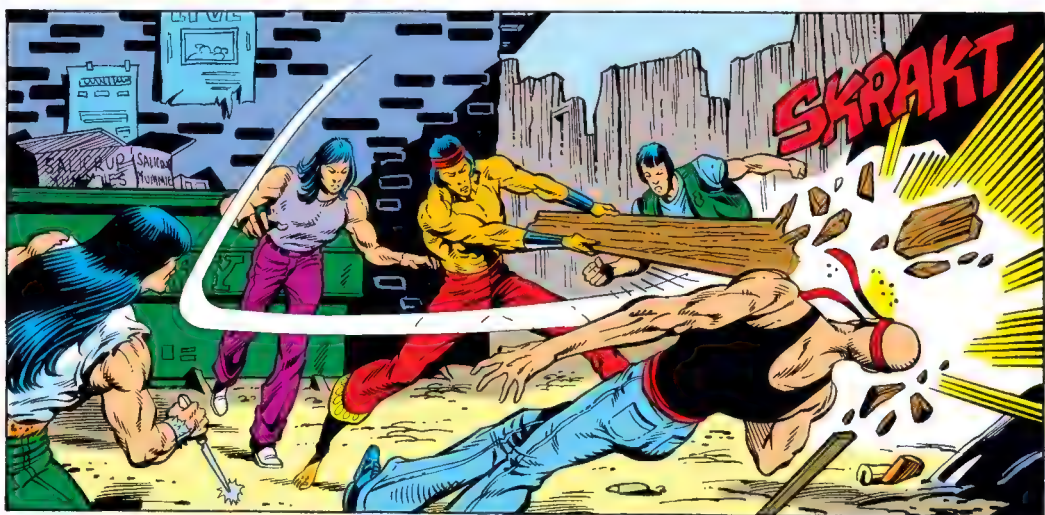
"AND SO, WHILE THE OTHERS SLEEP... I CANNOT. I HAVE NEVER BEEN A DIPLOMAT.

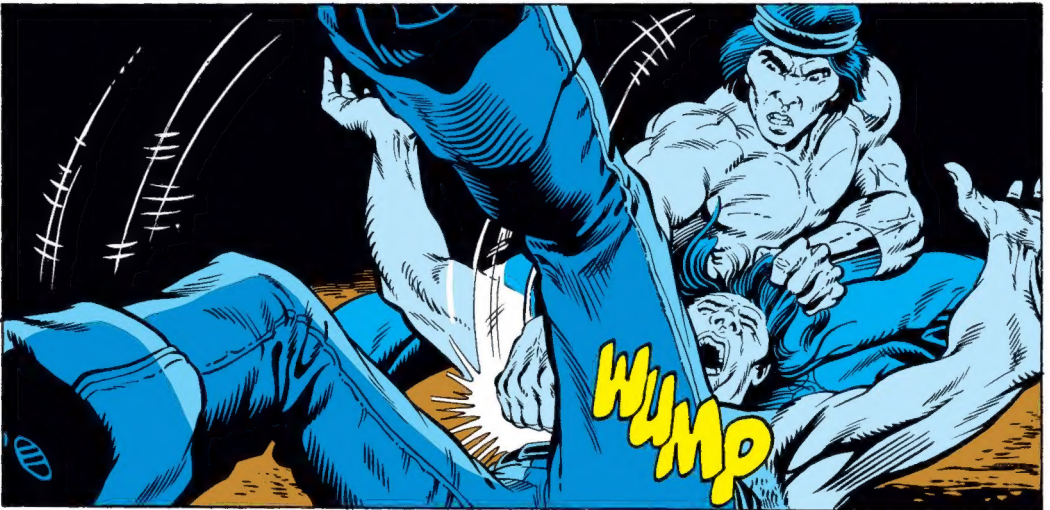
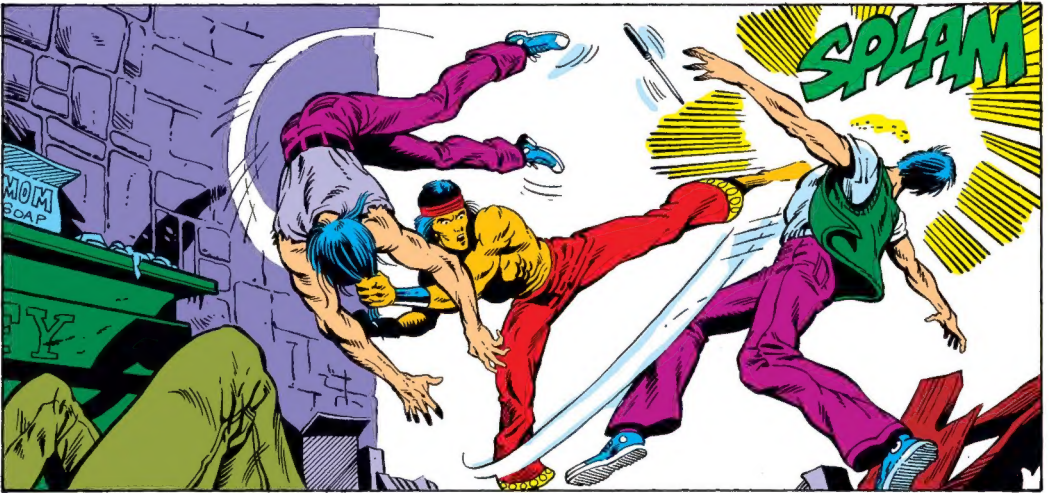


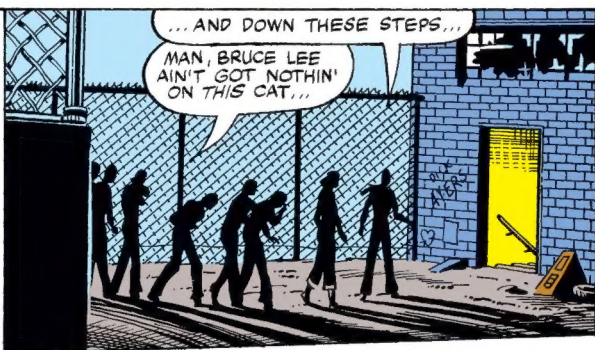














MISSIVES TO THE MASTER!

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

JIM SALICRUP
EDITOR
BOB BUDIAANSKY
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Dear Kung Fu Folks,

Before I say anything else about **MASTER OF KUNG FU** #80, I must take a moment to compliment Mike Zeck and Gene Day on their fine cover introducing Doug Moench's smoothly intricate "Pride of Leopards." I realize it's becoming commonplace to describe a favorite piece as "the best work to date," but in this case it can't be helped; I honestly feel that this cover is the single best illustration Zeck has thus far produced. It's the sort of grabber that seems assured of getting the casual rack-peruser's attention, and as a long-time reader I assure you that it's a splendid representation of Shang-Chi and the dangerous world in which he moves. The interior artwork was nothing to sneeze at either, mind you, but **MOKF** #80's stunning cover truly deserves to be singled out for special attention.

It would have been a crushing disappointment to turn that great cover and find that the story itself was a letdown, but fortunately Doug wasn't *about* to let anybody down. The early scenes at the castle in Scotland were handled so skillfully that they simultaneously brought new readers up to date, introduced important new elements in the continuing drama, and offered fresh insight into Shang-Chi's attitudes. These sequences — especially the one that brought them around the dinner table for speculation which may or may not have pinpointed the solution to the mystery infesting MI-6, but which certainly demonstrated how complex Doug's overall plot has become — were uncannily "right" in both look and feel and in terms of what they had to convey. Shang-Chi is uncomfortable with his current lot in life, but realizes there's no getting around what must be done, just as Nayland Smith knows that this talk about his methods not being all that different from Fu Manchu's is just the sort of thing Fu would like to encourage — indecisiveness due to self-doubt being the one thing those who would challenge him cannot afford.

The latter portion of #80 was just as action-packed as the first part was actionless. The slam-bang car chase featuring Tarr was tense and exciting, and the battle between Shang-Chi and his father's leopard-skinned assassins had a nervous energy all its own. The timing was particularly laudable in the former, Tarr's predicament leaving me almost breathless. And while Shang-Chi's tunnel fight with the assassins may have ended a bit too soon, the ending — leaving the impression that Chi and company were making off not with Leeks but with one of the killers — was as fine a foreshadowing of things to come as we've seen lately. I can't wait till next time.

Ed Via

1648 Dean Rd.
Roanoke, VA 24018

Friends,

For some time, **MOKF** has been leaving me frustrated — not because it isn't interesting, but because its full promise has not been fulfilled. Issue #76, however, was at last a touch of the former glory, the best issue since Gulacy left, or at least since the Dr. Doom two-parter. It's the first in that many issues that I've reread at once, which used to be a reflex action. I had even reluctantly concluded that **X-MEN** had become the best title Marvel was putting out.

Now, with the revival of important themes in Shang-Chi's life, I am once again breathlessly awaiting the continuation next month — left with the sense that the story is going somewhere instead of running on the spot. Shang-Chi's search for a father is fascinating and, I hope, indicates a return of Fu Manchu in the near future. The series needs him, not just for plot and continuity, but as an integral component of Shang-Chi's rising and advancing. His love/hate confusion regarding the doctor is about due for some personal contact, rather than mere surrogates — although the old man in this issue worked well on another level: The familiar scene of Shang-Chi being betrayed by those who should help him on his path.

The knottier question of Shang-Chi's pacifism interests me less, largely because it necessarily smacks of phoniness. Obviously, you cannot call the comics "Master of Meditation." Were Shang-Chi truly pacifist, he would have been killed back in his first appearance — or, surviving that, taken refuge in a monastery. Faced long ago with the

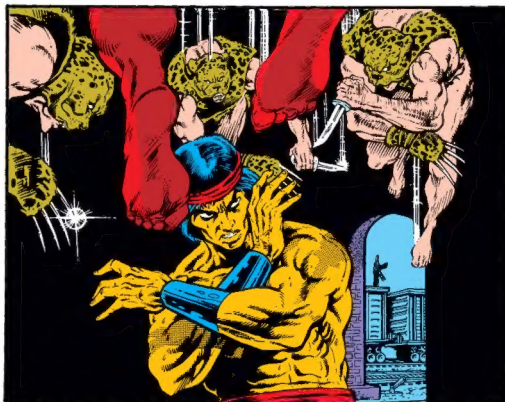
decision, he chose the active path of opposing evil in spite of the physical and spiritual dangers. (Remember when Smith showed him the drug addicts?) What he is doing now is coping with the decision — not easy. Neither is life and Shang-Chi is mature enough to accept it, surely, without whining. Is he being hardened by the process? I think so. The growing anger is apparent, as with his "trivial act" this issue of flinging the money at the old man. Typical of Shang-Chi to feel exaggerated remorse afterward. I suspect this toughening process is a part of his growth which will continue for some time, until a crisis point arrives, probably associated with his father.

The atmosphere in "Smoke, Beads, and Blood" also had welcome depth. The alternation of closeups and longshots, the details (such as the face of the man at the bar on page 3, caught up in Shang-Chi's affairs without understanding them), the juxtaposition of the gothic Scottish scenes with the rough Malay Jack wharfside scenes and the soft domesticity of the flat in Soho; light, darkness, and shadow — all this made the art as a whole better than it has been for a long time. This comic has a feel of its own. Bead curtains, the cat, the symbols, the nostalgic fight on the dock, the self-searching and the verbal wisdom and the romantic wistfulness are all a part of it.

Best of all was the last panel. I always like the symbolic group scenes, reminding us of old friends and enemies. Yin, yang, and a hint of menace. "We will do what we must... it was ever so." Superb.

Elizabeth Holden

211 Sunnyside Ave.
Ottawa, Ont. K1S 0R4 Canada



Doug,

I know it's a little late to ask but I'm going nuts. What happened with Leiko and Larner's lover Jennie in #49? Are you going to give us some of Leiko's past? I know it's hard for you to go into a woman's soul but please try, because you're the best, and ever since Gamora died there have been no *real* women in Marvel.

P.S. How do you pronounce your name?

Diana Gibson
500 Landfair D21
L.A., CA 90024

Thanks, one and all — to Ed for this typically exhaustive critique; to Elizabeth for her sinuous philosophical proings; and to Diana for wondering how to pronounce Doug's name. (It's "dug," Diana, accent on the only syllable.)

Seriously, Ms. Gibson, yes — we *will* be delving deeper into Leiko's past, and indeed have already done so in recent issues. Watch for more of the same in future issues — because, in spite of the difficulty, Doug can imagine no lovelier place to spend his time than within a woman's soul...

Next issue should be nifty, if all goes well. And if you want to check us out, we'll see you then.

(Oops — we almost left Diana dangling on the tease, and since we wouldn't want *o* do that: The last moniker rhymes with "wench.")